

## Is the De Vere case a one-off, asks Marsden

Chris Henwood

@chris\_henwood

The Skills Funding Agency and the National Apprenticeship Service have no idea how many providers are running introductory apprenticeships for groups of students who are all out of work, *FE Week* can reveal.

The De Vere Academy of Hospitality is the only known provider with permission to run access to apprenticeship courses in which 100 per cent of the learners are unemployed.

The permission, from the agency and the apprenticeship service, allowed the academy to bypass funding rules for 2012/13. These state: "Providers must not recruit more than 10 per cent of their apprenticeship starts on to the access to apprenticeship pathway without the prior agreement of their agency relationship manager."

But the agency and the apprenticeship service both said they could not tell *FE Week* how many other providers had been granted the same permission – or who they were.

They were also unable to list any providers allowed to run the course, billed as a pathway to full apprenticeship, with more than 10 per cent of students unemployed.

"We are currently still reviewing the emerging information and local response on what is a very new programme," said an apprenticeship service spokesperson.

"This includes the collation and collection of central data and reporting. The data will be available after the end of November."

The question over who – apart from De Vere – has permission for all access to apprenticeship learners to be unemployed is a key concern of shadow FE minister Gordon Marsden.

"The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and its agencies need to be transparent over issues such as this; there is

no point putting in place rules and then giving no indication whether they are being followed or not," said the Labour MP.

"We need clarity from BIS whether the De Vere case is a one-off or if it is occurring elsewhere. If that is indeed the case, then the new FE minister needs to explain clearly why this apparent breach of agency guidance is taking place."

A request for details on which providers run access to apprenticeships with unemployment rates of more than 10 per cent was put to the agency by *FE Week* under the Freedom of Information Act last month.

It said it "did searches and can advise that we do not hold the information requested", before passing the query on to the apprenticeship service.

A spokesperson for the service said that it did not hold the information either.

"We have also confirmed that De Vere has an agreement to undertake a hospitality-based access programme which the majority of learners are expected to use as a gateway to an employed apprenticeship," said the spokesperson.

The De Vere Academy advertised two access to apprenticeship course on its website earlier this year. Both were to last seven weeks and included two or three "work trials".

However, funding rules say that learners on these courses should spend most of their time "in a substantive work placement" with the same number of hours "as expected for those on a full apprenticeship".

The De Vere Group has defended its programme saying that it had achieved "outstanding" success rates and was helping to address youth unemployment.

The SFA allocated £9,679,626 to the De Vere Group, known as the Alternative Hotel Group, for the 2011/12 academic year, according to government figures. It included more than £8 million for apprentices aged 16 to 18.



## Carnival round-up

Strode College art and design foundation diploma student Alex Greuter, 18, models a Rio-themed costume made of cardboard. See pages 8 and 9 for more...

Monday, September 24, 2012  
www.feweek.co.uk

First college visit as minister



*FE Week* joins Matthew Hancock on a tour of Bournville College **Page 5**

Sally Hunt interview



An *FE Week* profile of the UCU general secretary **Page 6**

WorldSkills UK selection



Some of the UK's most talented youngster are put to the skills test **Pages 10 and 11**

Preview of new Ofsted report



Ofsted's Mike Davis on effective practice and inspection issues **Pages 12 and 13**

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## Edition 39

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## Top GCSE tweets:



@harriestella, So nice to be told by the government that my qualifications are worthless.

They're really supporting young people there. #gove



@mollllsssss, Oh how I love Michael Gove basically telling me that all my hard work over the past two years is irrelevant.



@chrisedwardsuk, Head-teachers: overcome the #GCSE-fiasco by digging a moat around your school and declaring that you're now governed by Wales



@govewatch, A "consultation" for Gove's GCSE plans? In Gov-ish, that means telling us what we're being forced to do #GoveMUSTgo



@heath\_lm, Spent the day with some very troubled teachers today. Most common question "it won't really happen will it?"

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# New apprenticeship system to get 'substantial upgrade'

Chris Henwood

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An online system for rubber-stamping apprenticeships is in line for a "substantial upgrade" after less than a year.

Students, providers and employers have been using the Apprenticeship Certificates England (ACE) system run by The Alliance of Sector Skills Councils since January.

The system, which cost £120,000 to develop, processes applications for apprenticeship approval and has already issued more than 94,000 certificates, with approvals from a pool of 25 Sector Skills Councils (SSCs).

But slow download speeds and inconsistent requests for information have hampered site users.

Alliance interim chief officer Richard Beamish said measures were now in place to solve the problems — and more would follow.

"There have been some issues although fewer than one might expect with such a new and complex system," he said.

"We have already increased server capacity and are in the process of a substantial upgrade to ensure that they do not recur. We also are currently working to simplify the certification process for providers and introducing consistency in evidence requirements across all certification bodies."

The issues prompted a meeting last week between the alliance, the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), and the Association of Colleges (AoC). The Skills Funding Agency and National Appren-

ticeships Service were also expected.

Terry Fennell, AELP's head of delivery, said: "Our members have been reporting teething problems with the system but it's important to stress these aren't major.

"The one thing that would really help is some SSCs turning around provider requests for certificates more quickly. Some are definitely better than others.

"We also need to get the message out that there is only one universal application form that has to be used from now on. It will be mandatory from January, but AELP would encourage providers to start using it now."

The new system was launched at the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills by ex-FE minister John Hayes who, at the click of a button, printed the first two certificates.

Hopes that it would make the process of certifying apprenticeships easier have not been dashed by the early problems, although Mr Beamish said it would be naive to suggest there were no issues or disagreements.

"We are aware that some have suffered from slow download speeds.

"While scanning and uploading remains important, we are working with awarding organisations, training providers and employers to speed up the certification process further.

"We are pleased with progress but we are not complacent. The system has been running since January and is being expanded to cope with current and anticipated future demand."



Former FE Minister John Hayes printing the first online certificate in January  
 Pic: Nick Linford

## Ofqual consults on ESOL

Chris Henwood

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Regulations that govern foreign learners of English could be scrapped.

Ofqual is considering three options for the future of ESOL (English for speakers of other languages), including the withdrawal of existing regulations for ESOL Skills for Life and ESOL for Work qualifications.

Other suggestions are for a new qualification called ESOL for Life in the UK or simply a revision of current rules.

An Ofqual spokesperson said: "New regulations will make ESOL more robust and fit for the purposes for which they are now used.

"For example, we propose that qualifications used for immigration-related purposes should be 100 per cent externally assessed and include identity checks of each student at each assessment, while other types of ESOL qualifications could use more flexible approaches to assessment.

"Our proposals are designed to secure the standards of the whole ESOL suite of qualifications and promote public confidence in them."

The proposals were welcomed by Chris

Taylor, ESOL programme manager at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE). "This review presents an important opportunity, not only to revise and update the existing regulations, but also to redevelop and make them more relevant.

"One of the consultation principles is to promote public confidence in them. This was identified as an area for further research in the NIACE-led ESOL Inquiry in 2006 and it remains a matter of concern.

"ESOL qualifications need to be recognised by employers - as well as education and training providers - if they are to have any value and if they are to help support learners progress into further study or to open up new careers for them."

He said NIACE would welcome a new language qualification at level three that had "currency for academic and professional progression".

Ofqual plans three consultation events — in Belfast, Leeds and London — in November. Email [reform@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:reform@ofqual.gov.uk) for further details or to register for these events.

The Welsh Government is expected to be seeking feedback on the proposals in Wales.

Comments on the proposals should be emailed to [consultations@ofqual.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@ofqual.gov.uk) by the deadline of December 3.

**Proposal one:** Introduce general conditions of recognition for a new qualification called ESOL for life in the UK. Ofqual: "We propose introducing regulations for a new qualification called ESOL for life in the UK which must meet specific rules including 100 per cent external assessment and the verification of the identity of those being assessed. These new rules should allow awarding organisations to demonstrate more clearly that their ESOL qualifications meet Home Office requirements."

**Proposal two:** Introduce revised general conditions of recognition for ESOL International qualifications, based on existing regulations. Ofqual: "This proposal introduces 100 per cent external assessment for ESOL international qualifications, whereas the existing rules allow up to 25 per cent internal assessment in limited circumstances."

**Proposal three:** Withdraw existing regulations for ESOL Skills for Life and ESOL for Work qualifications. Ofqual: "We propose to withdraw the additional rules applied to ESOL Skills for Life and ESOL for Work qualifications. Awarding organisations could develop these qualifications to meet their centres' needs and these qualifications would still need to comply with our general conditions of recognition."



# New minister says he's 'learning and listening'

Chris Moriarty

@feweek

New further education minister Matthew Hancock has told for the first time of his "exciting agenda" for change when he spoke exclusively to *FE Week*.

The joint Parliamentary Under Secretary for Business, Innovation and Skills also took time out from his first ministerial visit to insist that colleges would be given more freedom to meet the needs of students and employers.

"It [FE] is something I've cared about for a long time and it's a real privilege to be asked to be responsible for it in government," he said during a tour of Birmingham's landmark £66m Bournville College (see right).

"There are lots of areas where we can do more and go further.

"An exciting agenda of giving colleges more freedom to deliver what students and employers need was set out by my predecessor [John Hayes] and I'm keen to continue."

Mr Hancock said that he hoped to learn more about FE on trips, such as his visit on September 20 to the 4.2 acre campus site and

former home of car manufacturer Rover.

"You can only find out what's really going on by visiting," he said.

"Only then can you know what changes announced in Whitehall are really doing; so I'm learning and I'm listening and I'm asking lots of questions."

He added: "I've trying to make sure that I know exactly how the system works and figure out how it can work better."

But Mr Hancock said one of his most important early tasks would be to investigate the findings of the Richard Review.

"Doug Richard is going to publish his review into FE and apprenticeships soon . . . I'm looking forward to hearing what he's got to say," said Mr Hancock.

"But I'm keen to continue the strategy that was articulated and set out by my predecessor.

"I certainly want to do all I can to ensure that the focus is on the skills that employers need, and on being passionate about the esteem and the opportunity that FE presents."

Visit [www.feweek.co.uk](http://www.feweek.co.uk) for more of the interview with Mr Hancock



From left: Antonia Zawlocki, Katie Harris, principal Norman Cave, FE Minister Matthew Hancock, deputy principal Brendan Hartland, Amy Colton and David Semonella.  
Pic: Jamie Cooper for *FE Week*

## Bournville welcomes Matthew Hancock

Students came in for a grilling from Matthew Hancock as he quizzed apprentices on their college experiences. The new FE minister was at Bournville College, in Birmingham, where a new campus that opened in August 2011 caters for up to 11,000 students a year.

"I've been highly impressed by the college and the new campus, which is clearly going to play a vital role in the regeneration of the local area," he said.

"The attitude of the students I've met is very positive and, crucially, I've seen strong engagement with local employers to make sure that people get the best out of the skills that they learn here."

Principal Norman Cave said: "We are delighted that the new Minister has chosen Bournville College for his first visit. It's great to hear that he's keen to improve flexibility to enable us to meet the needs of students and employers efficiently."

# Ofsted plans complaint change

Chris Henwood

@chris\_henwood

Ofsted is looking at slashing 25 days off its time limit for accepting complaints about inspections and publishing reports even if a complaint has been lodged.

A complaint can currently be made during an inspection or up to 30 days after a report comes out.

But Ofsted is reviewing the procedure with a view to closing the complaints window to just five days of the incident or report publication.

Inspectors will also be expected to finish a visit and publish their report before more serious complaints are investigated — allowing the public to get the inspection result "as soon as possible."

The proposals have already come under fire from FE leaders, who warned against a five-day complaints window and urged Ofsted to delay reports where complaints had been lodged.

The consultation comes five months after inspectors were ordered off the premises at NCG (formerly Newcastle College Group) mid-visit.

The incident meant the inspection report, which graded the previously-outstanding college as good, was delayed by around two months.

However, an Ofsted spokesperson declined to say whether the NCG incident had triggered the review or would be considered as part of the consultation.

She said Ofsted was looking to "ensure our approaches are closely matched to the needs of those making complaints while recognising our public duty to reduce our costs wherever possible".

Ofsted's consultation document reads: "To ensure concerns can be investigated promptly

and while issues are fresh in the mind, complaints will only be considered if submitted within five working days of the incident.

"In the case of complaints about inspection, this means within five working days of the publication of the report. Complaints submitted after this will not normally be considered."

It adds: "In future we will normally only accept complaints about an inspection after the publication of the inspection report."

But Malcolm Trobe, deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, rejected the five-day proposal.

"Five days is far too short a timeframe to be able to take sound advice and gather all the evidence required by Ofsted to validate a complaint," he said.

"A standard timeframe for lodging complaints is ten working days and we think this would be far more reasonable."

And Joy Mercer, policy director at the Association of Colleges, said: "We would want to see a delay in reports being published if a complaint is pending."

She added: "There is an issue about whether or not a complaint can be fully investigated by the inspector carrying out the inspection — there is no independence there."

Ms Mercer also suggested the publication of complaints, with any identifying details removed, that had succeeded or failed to give colleges a clearer indication of how Ofsted might rule.

Ofsted's consultation, which is listed on its website, will also see it look at the way it handles complaints about providers. It has called for input on the consultation to be emailed to [consultations@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@ofsted.gov.uk) before the October 29 deadline.

A spokesperson for NCG declined to comment.

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**The UK's most talented apprentices, employees and learners will be competing against each other, aiming to secure a place in Squad UK for WorldSkills Leipzig 2013.**

[worldskillsuk.org](http://worldskillsuk.org)

This month's events are taking place at: City College Coventry, North Warwickshire & Hinckley College, Northern Regional College NI and Stephenson College. Twelve skills will be featured including: Mechatronics, CNC Milling and Turning, Jewellery, Autobody Repair, Car Painting Welding and Refrigeration.

All competitors who are selected for Squad UK will undergo a specialised training programme supported by a dedicated Training Manager for each skill as well as a team of other trainers, experts and Performance Coaches. The young competitors will then compete for a place in Team UK by taking part in selection events which will be held throughout the UK in March 2013.

WorldSkills is the biggest international skills competition in the world. Held every two years in one of its 61 member countries/regions, the competition sees around 1000 young people aged 18 - 23 from across the world come together to compete for medals in more than 40 different skills. WorldSkills Leipzig takes place from 2-7 July 2013.

**Find out more about Squad UK and see them in action at WorldSkills UK – The Skills Show, 15-17 November, NEC Birmingham** - the UK's largest annual celebration, inspiring people with exciting opportunities in further education, skills and Apprenticeships.

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## Editor's comment

## Delhi dilemma

It was an easy decision to put Sir Michael's Wilshaw's comments about 'Deptford not Delhi' on the front page last week.

Admittedly, my initial excitement was benefiting from Deptford being on FE Week's doorstep, so we could take our own cheeky photograph to make a montage.

However, in truth I knew that Sir Michael's challenge would stimulate significant reaction and debate in the FE sector.

And so it proved, with strong rebuttles this week on page 6 from the Association of Colleges, and, on page 7, the chief executive of an awarding body (and former principal), and the 157 Group.

In my view, Sir Michael used his first speech to the FE sector to pose a long list of challenging but legitimate questions, such as "has growth been at the expense of quality?" and "should there be consolidation before expansion?"

These are legitimate questions because many colleges have suffered at the hands of Ofsted in recent months (see pages 12 and 13). Understanding why and reversing the tide of grade 3s and 4s is clearly essential for survival, and it won't get any easier with the introduction of a new inspection framework.

So what do colleges need to do? First, clarity of mission and purpose is critical, with governors and staff at every level clear and buying into the rationale for every part of the curriculum offer.

College leaders can only be sure this is the case if they mystery shop their organisation at every level. We need more testing of assumptions in FE.

The college principal might be enjoying international travel or rubbing shoulders with self-made "entrepreneurs", but are frontline staff rowing in the same direction?

If international work is important to the college, prove it in the self-assessment report that it enhances the rest of the provision.

Evidence, as Ofsted will tell you, is king.

Nick Linford, editor

## FE Week investigates

## Cautious welcome for GCSE change

Chris Henwood

@chris\_henwood

Education Secretary Michael Gove's plans to cull coursework by axing GCSEs for a new English baccalaureate have been welcomed cautiously by FE leaders.

The Tory minister revealed his plans to end the GCSE, introduced in 1988, when he told MPs last week: "Record increases in performance at GCSE have not been matched by the same level of improvements in learning. While pass rates have soared we have fallen down international education league tables."

Mr Gove said the eBacc would start to replace GCSEs in 2015, ending "modules" and cutting back on classroom assessment and coursework in favour of a return to more traditional end-of-year exams.

"Changes made to GCSEs, specifically the introduction of modules and the expansion of coursework and controlled assessment, further undermined the credibility of exams, leaving young people without the rigorous education they deserved," he said.

"These reforms are radical - so we will consult widely. Their introduction will require careful preparation."

He said that students would sit exams for the first new certificates in English, maths and the sciences in September 2015. Other subjects would follow.

Key FE figures from the Sixth Form Colleges' Forum (SFCF), Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and Association of Colleges (AoC) agreed that there was a need for consistency and said they wanted to be involved in drawing up the new system.

James Kewin, SFCF's deputy chief executive, said: "Reform is needed for GCSEs, but the

process should be guided and informed by education professionals rather than politicians.

"The timescale for implementation - particularly while there are so many other reforms in train, not least to A-levels - will also lead to confusion and disruption for students. It will be demoralising too for students sitting their GCSEs in the next few years to know that they are working towards a soon to be defunct qualification.

"And while there is certainly a need to refine assessment, removing coursework and controlled assessment completely seems extreme, and is perhaps driven by politics rather than pedagogy."

Martin Doel, AoC chief executive, said: "We need to understand both the philosophy and the theory that underpins these changes and how they will help to improve and engage children of all abilities.

"The important thing is to use the time between now and the introduction of the new scheme to properly design and develop a coherent understandable system.

"As one of the largest groups of recruiters for post-GCSE students, colleges would be happy to help in this process. Hopefully this would mean a joined-up passage through education for every student taking these exams.

"We need to understand how the new system regarding awarding bodies will work and will be particularly keen to make sure that it does not become uneconomical, and that there are no knock-on effects for other qualifications."

Brian Lightman, general secretary at ASCL, said: "We look forward to responding to the actual proposals in detail and engaging with the government in a discussion about reforming exams in a way the meets 21st-century needs.

"It will be essential to debate the future of



Education Secretary Michael Gove Pic: Nick Linford

the national curriculum alongside proposals to change qualifications. Reforming exams and the school accountability framework without considering the curriculum would be a classic case of cart-before-the-horse and would not lead to improved standards.

"This is a once-in-a-generation reform and will affect the lives of millions of young people and our economic future. It is right to defer the start to 2015, to make sure everyone affected, including parents and professionals, can have an input.

"The knock-on effect of the more rigorous exams on post-16 could be significant, depending on the number of students who do not pass the exams at 16, or for whatever reason are deemed not ready to take them, and sit them at 17 or 18. We're pleased that the consultation at least acknowledges that there will be additional pressure on post-16 institutions.

"We cannot allow the problems of this year's exams to be swept under the carpet in the fixation with future reform. We must make sure that lessons are learned from this year's fiasco, and that the current exams are administered properly for the next four years."

## Corrections

As if Graham Hasting-Evans hadn't suffered enough being referred to by *FE Week* as 'cheif' executive of the National Open College Network (NOCN), it seems that's not even his job.

Last week's Corrections section had looked to put the spelling matter to rest, but, as Sophie Butland, from Open College Network South West Region, correctly points out, he's actually NOCN's managing director.

#### Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

We'd be more than happy to give you a named credit should you wish. In which case, tell us who you are and where you work.

Email us at [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk) with Corrections in the subject line.

## Comments

#### Plans for SFA audit of 'rip-off' provider fees shelved

*I am disappointed with the message this sends out. It gives the impression the SFA has backed down on a clear policy commitment in the face of concerted opposition. I suspect the reality is what we have seen too often elsewhere — decide first, consult next, think again and come up with something else.*

*There is undoubtedly a problem here, but this reversal does not provide comfort and reassurance to the sector where many struggle under a funding regime shrouded in secrecy. Ironically, one major prime expressed disappointment privately to me.*

**Peter Cobrin, Apprenticeships England**

#### Group Training Associations 'the answer to skills gap'

*Indeed, skills gaps exist and are growing in the economy. One of the critical aspects to solving these issues is the development of better educational programmes, and then aligning them to actual workplace needs. Business, education, politics, communities... everyone has a hand in helping to figure out the best ways to move forward.*

*Career and technical education has been shown to be an especially effective way of boosting student achievement, preparing workers for tomorrow's jobs, etc. It is this area — not just the work of four-year colleges — that needs to be invested in at both the secondary and post-secondary level.*

*And the programmes described in this piece*

*are a good step in the right direction on that.*

#### Jason Sprenger, Industry Workforce Needs Council

##### Have you got something to say about FE or one of our stories?

We want to hear from you. Email us with Comments in the subject line at [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk) or leave a comment on our website.

Or, you can write to us at *FE Week*, 161-165 Greenwich High Road, London SE10 8JA.

Full contact details should be provided and can be withheld by *FE Week* upon request.



## FE Week profile

# Sally Hunt ~ her story

**Holly Welham**

@hollywelham

The General Secretary of the University and College Union (UCU) talks to *FE Week*

Arguing with teachers about the Falklands War, a plucky and inquisitive teenage Sally Hunt makes her way to Greenham Common women's peace camp to campaign for nuclear disarmament.

"I think things have to be argued and I think they have to be justified - I don't think there are any givens in this world," she reflects.

Hunt is at the University and College Union's headquarters, tucked away behind the hustle and bustle that is Camden High Street, North London, where she speaks about her upbringing in Germany.

Her father taught in a British forces school, before the family moved to Chippenham, in Wiltshire, when she was seven years old.

Her mother, also a teacher, brought her up with a firm belief in the importance of social justice.

"She gave me a very strong sense of what women ought to achieve and how they ought to aspire to be a part of life, and actually be a full part of life - not someone who just sits on the sidelines and watches," she says.

At 16 Hunt went to a "very cold, very unpopulated church hall" to see Nobel Peace Prize winner Philip Noel-Baker speak. The steadfast campaigner for nuclear disarmament and former Labour politician was "very old, very frail".

"I remember seeing him having to pop pills while he was speaking because his hands were shaking," she says.

Campaigners like Baker had a huge impact, admits Hunt.

Her interest in political activism flourished when she went to the University of Sussex to study international relations.

It was a university renowned for its radicalism and she was "hit by an absolute melee of interests and persuasions".

The debates, protests and fundraising that engulfed her life taught her as much, if not more, than the degree itself.

"It's the bit I worry most about students now," she says.

"It's so hard with the fee regimes for students to actually have time to participate in all those extracurricular activities.

"I think it's really important that you're given that space - to be quite stupid or too black and white in your opinions, or too determined in what you think is the right thing.

"What education does is make you learn to debate. It makes you learn to argue. It makes you learn the world is a very big place."

Hunt was at university during the 1980s when miners were going on strike across the country and she became heavily involved in trying to defend the Kent mining community.

Unbeknown to her, her grandfather had been a Kent miner.

"It was a very strange full circle. That was where my family had been and that's where I ended up," she says.

More than 20 years later her time in Kent remains vivid.

"They had no money - no sustenance. They were on strike for a year and that's not something I imagine many people will have to confront in their lives," she says.

"I remember spending a weekend with one family and them giving us steak. There wasn't a hope in hell they had the money to do that, but it was really important to them because we were their guests."

**"What education does is make you learn to debate. It makes you learn the world is a very big place"**

Since the mine closures she has driven back through the area.

"I find it very sad still. You can see the outlines of the old coal piles and you can see the old pits - it's tough to see that," says Hunt.

Nevertheless, she speaks passionately about helping to defend this "extraordinary" community.

"It teaches you what solidarity is and it teaches you what struggle is," she adds.

"It's not about heroic speeches. It's not about shouting really loudly from the barricades. It's not about saying that I demand resolution at every stage - what it's really about is communities looking after each other."

So when she graduated, having been vice-president of the students' union, she had no doubt she wanted to work within the trade union movement.

Her first job was senior research officer at a union for staff at Halifax Building Society and she later represented employees at Nationwide.

And it was her subsequent position at the Association of University Teachers (AUT), which she joined in 2002, that led her to the UCU.

The move to the UCU followed the merger in 2006 of the AUT and National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education.

Hunt, who had been general secretary at the AUT, was elected the first general secretary of the newly-formed UCU in March 2007, narrowly beating main challenger Roger Kline by 1,346 votes.

When members cast their votes in March this year, however, she won with a landslide victory - defeating sole opponent Mark Campbell by a margin of 6,835 votes, gaining



73 per cent of the ballots cast.

"I felt absolutely blown away by that," she says.

But whereas this was one particularly memorable event, it's the people she's met along her union career path that have proved an unending source of inspiration.

"It's where it's people - it's not about going in and seeing a minister," she says.

"It's not about sitting down and talking to a national employer - it's where you meet the people who have the courtesy to pay £100 each to a collective pot to enable me to do my job.

"I will never cease to be amazed that I get to do this."

As she talks about the information and confidence people entrust her with, the suggestion her role in people's lives is a responsibility meets with an unexpected frown and shake of the head.

"It's not a responsibility. It's an absolute honour," she points out.

"It is something you are very lucky to have if you are part of the trade union movement.

"People often think we spend our whole time very cross and very upset and very depressed.

"But actually I am in the best group of

people you could possibly ask for, because it's about people making a positive contribution to each other. "That's something that very few people get to do."

### It's a personal thing

**What's your favourite book?**

Impossible question. At the moment *The Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara

**What did you want to be when you were younger?**

My mum tells me I said unions and politics from an early age

**What do you do to switch off from work?**

I don't really, but I cook, I read, I run

**Who, living or dead, would you invite to a dinner party?**

Catherine de Medici, Margaret of Anjou and Elizabeth David

**What would your super power be?**

Helping Arsenal win the triple would be good, or water divination - preferably both



## FE Week Experts

# Innovating learning

Susan Easton, NIACE programme manager for digital learning, looks at the role new technologies could play in adult learning

The concept of learning innovation is not new, as adult learning practitioners and providers continuously review and revise their practice and delivery models. What is new, are the rapid, startling and increasingly frequent changes in technology, and the potential for these to support and initiate learning innovation.

Technology can facilitate learning at any time and almost anywhere; using audio, video and text content from broadcasters, education providers or their other learners; through social media; and through an increasing number of devices, including smartphones, games consoles and tablets. Use of technology in learning is no longer optional – without it, we limit the number and range of adults who can access learning and constrain the quality of their learning experience. By utilising technology, we open a world of possibilities in the way adults learn, progress, record and get support for their learning.

Without technology, adults with physical difficulties would find it difficult to access learning. Without technology, many adults would have limited access to learning opportunities due to geography, finance and lifestyle. With the help of technology, no one is barred from participation in some form of learning – whether formal or informal – only knowledge and confidence stand in the way.

In spite of this, while society embraces the adoption of technology, learning delivery remains two steps behind. Undeniably, the term ‘innovation’ brings with it some negative connotations. Funding often requires “innovative approaches” and the term has come to equate reinvention, often at the cost of the tried and tested. However, the word should suggest something different – renewal and change – and the need for renewal in post-16 learning has never been greater.

What is the best way to support adult learning practitioners and providers to become familiar with recent developments in technology, and consider their use in realistic learning contexts?

Who better to work with than the BBC, with their learning remit, wide experience in learning with broadcasting and their vast number of high quality learning resources? Subsequent discussions helped to develop a shared vision, resulting in a decision to host a joint conference that offers new and exciting ways for practitioners to engage with the cutting edge of learning technology and consider their use in adult learning.

The conference will support practitioners and providers with limited experience in using technology as well as those with more extensive experience, by discussing innovative uses of familiar technologies, introducing new resources and supporting delegates to keep pace with recent technological changes.

The conference on December 4 in Manchester will open with a keynote speech from Saul Nassé, controller of BBC Learning, who will discuss how it is using the unique power of



broadcasting and technology to inspire audiences of all ages to learn.

He will provide an overview of BBC content available for adult learners and discuss how the teams within BBC Learning are using television, online, mobile and social networking to deliver innovative educational content.

‘A Slice of Raspberry Pi’, from Eben Upton, executive director of the Raspberry Pi Foundation, will stimulate discussion on the possibilities of programming within the adult curriculum, while Steve Stanley, HMI, principal officer, adult skills and employment, will discuss what inspectors are looking for in the use of technology for learning.

Presentation sessions on the use of mobile apps, the Flipped Classroom, learning outside institutions and E-Reading rooms will lead to a discussion on different contexts for learning, while workshops and knowledge exchanges will range from augmented reality to Community Learning Trusts; learning with community radio to massive open online courses; digital identity to using learners own technologies.

The day will end with the presentation of the digital practitioner of the year awards. We are looking for nominations for these awards which will recognise those tutors who have made adult learning more accessible, engaging and innovative and who have used technology to help adults get the opportunity to learn in new and exciting ways.

**Register for the conference at [www.niace.org.uk/campaigns-events/events/Innovating-Learning](http://www.niace.org.uk/campaigns-events/events/Innovating-Learning)**

**Nominate for the Digital Practitioner of the Year Awards [www.niace.org.uk/campaigns-events/events/digital-practitioner-awards-information](http://www.niace.org.uk/campaigns-events/events/digital-practitioner-awards-information)**

*Susan Easton, NIACE programme manager for digital learning*



“By working with Delhi you can give learners the education they need to be successful in Deptford”

## Delhi for Deptford

**John Mountford, AoC international director, defends colleges’ foreign recruitment**

In recent weeks criticism has been levelled at colleges for their hugely beneficial work abroad.

This very paper reported a turn of phrase by Sir Michael Wilshaw, Her Majesty’s chief inspector, which appeared to question the benefits of FE’s international work.

In his speech to an AoC conference, Sir Michael challenged colleges to consider whether international work was being sought at the expense of the local community and quality improvement or, as it was phrased, Deptford not Delhi.

I think it is important to answer that challenge – and the public should be assured that both from quality and strategic perspectives there are plenty of reasons why colleges should embrace and develop their international work.

It is by working with Delhi that you can give learners the education they need to be successful in Deptford.

Colleges have a long and successful tradition of developing programmes that meet the needs of local and national partners. It therefore makes sense to use the skills and experience we have gained from this work and export our world class FE system to international partners.

These commercial opportunities allow colleges to develop programmes, generate income that allow them to run courses they wouldn’t normally run, hire local staff and purchase resources that they couldn’t normally purchase. It is a credit to the sector that we were asked to lead on the government’s FE Global Strategy.

To address the quality issue there is no known correlation between poor quality and international provision. A quick study of 20 colleges, all with sizable international operations, shows them to typically demonstrate grades of ‘good’ or better.

The proven benefits in internationalising the curriculum in a global skills market, coupled with the confidence working internationally brings to students and staff, has obviously benefited these colleges.

However, as I’m sure the chief inspector is aware, international provision sits outside the Ofsted remit and due to this gap a number

of colleges have stepped forward to undergo a review of the quality of their international work to become AoC International Charter members.

The college sector knows that to be effective internationally you need to display a high commitment to quality. To suggest that we can take our eye off this essential element, when working with international partners and students, simply doesn’t make sense.

Colleges work with their local communities, to provide learners with meaningful skills and qualifications that allow them to be competitive and productive in the workplace or in their future studies. With this key mission in mind, it is important to acknowledge that we live and work in a globalised environment, where technology and industry have radically changed. It is one that needs a fluid, high-skilled and internationally competitive workforce.

A large number of students will have jobs that are directly linked with multinational companies. Colleges’ international work goes a long way to provide an environment where learners can start to gain these skills. It is by working internationally that we can inspire our learners to think internationally and show them how they can develop and grow from their local communities.

Shouldn’t we be applauding colleges who have the ambition and strategic vision to work together to establish a UK Colleges office in Delhi; isn’t it a credit to the sector that we have been asked to lead on the government’s FE Global Strategy?

The income generated from international projects and initiatives helps develop the quality and resources for all our provision and grows our sector’s worldwide reputation.

In this technologically driven age it seems both outdated and out of touch to start questioning whether colleges should be taking an international perspective – a more pertinent question would be how we can do more.

We should strive to remember and celebrate the great benefits overseas students and partnerships bring to all our colleges and home students’ experience – in fact the real headline should be ‘Delhi for Deptford’.

*John Mountford, international director at the Association of Colleges*



## FE Week Experts

# Focus on Bradford and Bangalore

**Professor Daniel Khan OBE, chief executive of OCN London, offers a response to Sir Michael Wilshaw's 'Deptford not Delhi' speech**

Sir Michael Wilshaw has a reputation for making controversial statements, and his speech at AoC's conference this month has once again thrown him into the media spotlight.

The Ofsted chief inspector warned of the dangers of concentrating on attracting international students to FE colleges. He spoke of focusing on Deptford rather than Delhi, in a speech aimed to promote the recruitment of domestic learners.

However Sir Michael's speech reveals a rather short-sighted and narrow-minded approach to FE. FE exports are valued at £1bn a year and international learners are important both culturally and economically to colleges and communities.

Are Sir Michael's misguided comments based on arrogance or, perhaps, ignorance of the FE sector?

In May John Hayes announced an FE 'Global Strategy'. The AoC conference in which it was launched encouraged colleges to open themselves up to international students and stakeholders. Hayes advocated an international strategy in order to create a mobile and culturally diverse student body, which will be well-placed in the global marketplace. By doing so, colleges and students will have the skills and knowledge required to compete against the most competitive emerging markets. Furthermore, the government's 2011 *New Challenges*,

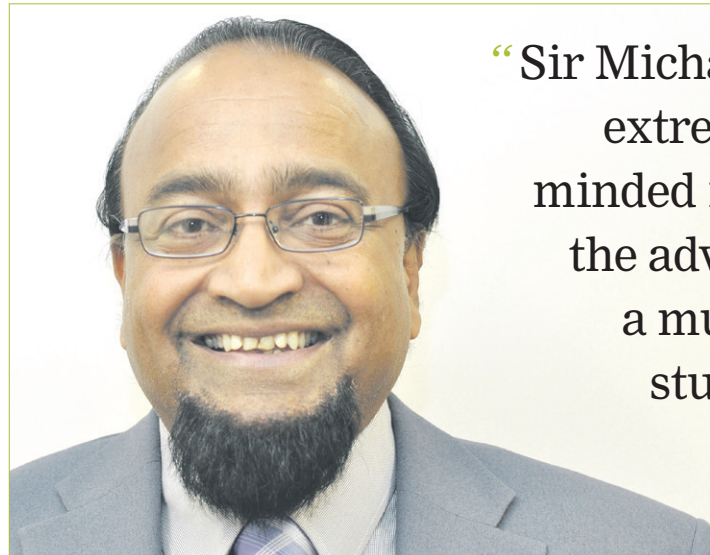
*New Chances* paper spoke of the increasing demand for technical and vocational skills and their importance to sustained economic growth. Hence, the government has demonstrated its commitment to ensuring colleges remain focused on international recruitment.

In the light of such commitment, Sir Michael's words seem somewhat ill-informed.

He also woefully ignores that students from across the globe do not just benefit the college in which they study, but the community as a whole. International students bring their own traditions, enriching the local area culturally. They can help in widening the horizons and experiences of local students, exposing them to new values, beliefs and opportunities.

He appears extremely close-minded in ignoring the advantages of a multicultural student body. An influx of international learners can offer a wealth of experience to our students, colleges and communities.

Aside from cultural concerns, foreign students are also of enormous benefit economically, to both the communities in which they live and the country as a whole. Such economic value extends well beyond their fee payments. International students, especially those arriving with expertise, can fill skill gaps and generate new economic growth during study and after graduation. This is particularly the case in students from emerging markets, primarily China and India, who bring with them cutting edge technical expertise. At the same time, the local economy also benefits from 'subsistence' spending, the money that students spend on goods and services outside their stud-



“Sir Michael appears extremely close-minded in ignoring the advantages of a multicultural student body”

ies. Inevitably local businesses profit from such expenditure.

A good example of a college's success in tapping into the international market is the Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education. In conjunction with major local employers, the college helped create an Institute of Food and Fisheries. It did so to meet the needs of the industries based in the town, the largest concentration of food industries in Europe. The Grimsby institute recognised an excellent opportunity to provide expert training and consultancy in this area.

Since its creation it has been recognised internationally and attracted students from across the globe to its programmes. This has enabled local students to integrate with people of diverse backgrounds, which they would

need to do when working in a global economy.

In the light of these considerations, Sir Michael's words seem ill-judged and short-sighted. He fails to see the wider perspective and the importance of an international outlook for colleges.

The creation of an international student body extends beyond bringing in money for the College; it diversifies the local community and boosts the economy with new skills and innovation.

If colleges follow Sir Michael's advice they are in danger of sacrificing their share in the country's best export and compromising the strength of the FE sector as a whole.

*Professor Daniel Khan OBE, chief executive of OCN London*

## Deptford not Delhi – but why not both?



**Kate Green, director of business development at the 157 Group, responds to Sir Michael Wilshaw on behalf of the 157 Group International Network**

It would be interesting to understand the basis for Sir Michael's warning in the last edition of *FE Week*. Is he concerned our FE colleges are being overrun with foreign students, or is he worried that a college's focus on quality could be undermined by diversifying its student body too much?

In either case, it is worth looking at the facts.

The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) figures for 2008-9 show the vast majority of FE institutions with overseas students have fewer than 200 such students on roll, spread over a wide range of curriculum areas.

What we can say is that the benefits of international work have been made clear over successive years – demonstrated by government ministers advocating a Global FE strategy. It seems odd that Sir Michael at this stage should choose to question what appears to be a central tenet of government policy in this area.

The important role of FE colleges offering qualifications to international students who

may then progress to British universities, or, even more importantly, return home with skills they may not have been able to gain, is surely an aspect of global social contribution that should not be underestimated.

What do institutions have to gain from a vibrant international population?

Well, the financial benefits are one aspect – would anyone question the ability of leading universities or private schools to include large numbers of international students in their overall cohort?

It is worth remembering that the fees paid by international students contribute towards enhancing the provision of the college as a whole – and the use of local services by these students also has a direct impact on the local economy.

Should a group of students who undoubtedly bring diversity and a breadth of knowledge from which the whole college community can benefit not be encouraged to be here and study?

I am constantly impressed at the stories I hear from my colleagues in the 157 Group International Network about international students playing active roles in everything a college does.

It is often said that international students act as role models to others – either through an

enhanced work ethic or simply because they appreciate the value of being able to access our skills system – which has obvious benefits to all. The global perspective is something we ask our students to develop – surely the best way for them to do this is to be exposed to those from other cultures and countries?

In an age where communities of learning are encouraged to flourish, many colleagues report that the opportunities opened up by international provision for the exchange of practice, for staff and students alike, have led directly to improved teaching and learning in the classroom or workshop.

And we must not forget the external face of our own skills system – why would we not want our skills sector to be a source of pride, and something that people from other countries might aspire to be a part of? Surely this is all about the reputation of UK plc as much as anything else?

All colleges have a local mission – they serve their communities well – the point is that they do not look to international markets to undermine this but rather to complement it.

*Kate Green, director of business development at the 157 Group*



# FE Week campus round-up

sponsored by **empra**



From left: Jennie Gardiner, Roy Ainscough, both previous chief executives of EMFEC, and current chief executive Paul Eeles

## Lounge marks EMFEC's 100 years in FE

An East Midlands charity's 100 years of support in the further education sector has been marked with the opening of a plush Centenary Lounge.

Nearly 50 years of service were represented as staff and chief executives, old and new, enjoyed a celebratory afternoon tea at East Midlands Further Education Council's (EMFEC) Nottingham headquarters.

A raffle was also held at the event to raise funds for EMFEC's nominated charity, the

Helena Kennedy Foundation, which supports young people to progress from further to higher education.

Current chief Paul Eeles said: "It's great that so many people from our past could be at the event. The organisation's strength has been its dedicated staff and ability to change over the past hundred years."

The charity was established in 1912 as an examining and qualifications body and is now also the regional body for the Association of Colleges.



From left: Walsall College's Andrew Watts, shop floor team leader, Solihull, Matt Handley, shop floor assistant and Paul Armstrong, trainee team leader, both Oldbury

## DIY skills in store for Homebase students

Home is where the art is for staff at a well-known DIY chain who achieved City and Guilds qualifications in painting and decorating.

Fifteen customer service advisers from Homebase stores across the West Midlands, including Sutton Coldfield, Oldbury, Solihull, Leamington Spa and Worcester, gained their level one certificates at Walsall College's construction department.

Working with MidKent College, the Midland college developed a bespoke five-day programme to meet Homebase's needs.

The training was designed to help retail staff increase their product knowledge and

enable them to give better advice to customers.

Paul Armstrong, trainee team leader at Homebase Oldbury, said: "The course at has given me some great tips-of-the-trade to pass on to customers."

"Having completed a mix of practical and classroom-based exercises, I feel more confident about advising customers on products and techniques that will help them achieve professional results."

Barry Hill, construction curriculum manager at the college, added: "We are looking at developing courses with Homebase shaped on this successful format to help staff in other areas of DIY."

## Students earn their leadership spurs



David Pinchin, Leadership through Sport founder (centre), with Joe Lyons, from Tottenham Hotspur, staff and students from the College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London's accounting academy

Premier League outfit Tottenham Hotspur have teamed up with a London college to develop students' leadership skills.

The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London welcomed Leadership through Sport founder David Pinchin to speak to 15 recruits on the subject.

The exclusive programme, run at the college in association with Spurs and the sport charity, is designed to help young people become leaders in business, sports or community action.

The students, who were all picked from the college's accounting academy, took part in a rigorous selection process to assess their

leadership and business skills.

Each candidate took part in a series of interviews, as well as activities leading and coaching young footballers.

Tracey Kiangabi, one of the students taking part, said: "My long-term goal is to work in management, but I want to make sure that I have the full range of skills especially being able to support and develop staff and a team."

Paul Head, principal, said: "We are delighted to be working with such a top flight premier league club, which also has an excellent reputation for meaningful community outreach and involvement."

## Hairdresser duo ahead of the competition



From left: hairdressing student Luize Rotberga, 20, lecturer Debbie Williams, and student Harriet Bowring, 17

Two Midland college students have been getting ahead of the competition in regional WorldSkills Competitions.

Burton and South Derbyshire College (BSDC) Hairdressing students snipped their way to success, scooping second and fourth place in the recent regional heats.

Harriet Bowring, 17, and Luize Rotberga, 20, got through in the intermediate level of the WorldSkills competition showing off a number of skills, including creating a cut and a colour. They were among just 16 of 200 applicants to be selected to battle it out in the regional competition.

Both students will now compete against the best in the national final of the WorldSkills UK competition at The NEC Birmingham from November 14 to 17.



Former Bromley College human resources student Becky Shailer, 25

## Becky aims for outstanding praise

An outstanding student award could be heading the way of a Kent Council worker.

Former Bromley College student Becky Shailer, 25, has been shortlisted for praise from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Her work as an information analyst at Kent Council's human resources department has put her on a shortlist of five for the award.

Becky, who completed a level five intermediate certificate in human resource management in July, was co-chair of Kent Council's younger persons' staff group, Aspire.

She managed a consultation and relaunch of the group in a bid to meet the needs of young colleagues and is also responsible for more than 20 projects.

"It's really fantastic to be recognised as I am incredibly proud of my achievements with Kent Council's staff group," said Becky.

Institute tutor Penny Keys said: "Becky is a perfect example of how our professional students use what they have learned in the classroom and apply it to their workplace."

The award winner will be announced at a black-tie event in London on October 17.

**Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?**

Send your stories with pictures to [news@feweek.co.uk](mailto:news@feweek.co.uk) including names, ages and course of students where applicable



## College course goes green with energy



North East college has become one of the first winners to share a £1m pot of government cash aimed at boosting energy efficiency skills.

Gateshead College's £75,000 contract will see it train dozens of people between now and the end of the year to become newly-qualified Green Deal energy assessors.

Paul Gough, commercial operations manager at the college (above), said: "The contract win is a major coup for us and fits within our green employability agenda.

"We already have a track record in energy assessment training so we were able to demonstrate sector knowledge, clear expertise and success in the sector to secure the Green Deal work."

Green Deal launches later this year and aims to renovate millions of draughty, energy-inefficient properties.

However, no one will be able to participate in the scheme without their property having been assessed.

The government wants to have 1,000 newly-qualified assessors in place by the end of 2012.



Strode College art and design foundation diploma student Johanna Legg, 19, models a cardboard peacock outfit

## Peacock feather in students' cap

Art and design students at a Somerset college strutted their stuff on the catwalk in cardboard couture costumes.

Youngsters at Strode College created sturdy costumes in just one-and-a-half days after getting back from the summer holiday before the project finale - a catwalk show in front of other students and staff.

The glamorous costumes included Peacock, Rio, Bird of Paradise, Angel, Tribal Warrior Bird and Corpse Bride.

Duncan Cameron, Strode College's sculpture teacher, said: "We always kick off the year with a project to warm up the students' creativity after the summer holidays and to get them working together."

Students who worked on the cardboard costumes are studying art and design for level three extended diplomas and foundation pre-degree diplomas.



From left: Luke White, Scott Ritchie and Staz Hair

## Arts student ready for X Factor boot camp

Simon Cowell will be casting his eye over a former London college student whose band has made it through to the *X Factor* boot camp.

Luke White, who studied performing arts at Barking and Dagenham College, and his Times Red bandmates Scott Ritchie and Staz Hair wowed show judges with a rendition of Amy Winehouse hit *Rehab*.

The Romford 25-year-old, who achieved a distinction in his BTec first diploma in

performing arts, spent three years in a Take That tribute band, before starting his own three-piece. Luke, who was was keeping tight-lipped about how far the band get in the hit ITV show, said: "I made some great friends at college and spent every day doing what I love."

A college spokesperson said: "All of the team here is hoping that these Essex boys go all the way to the final."

## College hunts for colourful coat wearer



Havering College student Ryan Clark-Lockhart, 17, tries Joseph's Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat on for size. Also pictured, from left, are fellow music students Bethanie Arnold and Virginia Page, both 16

The search is on for someone to play the lead role of Joseph on a West End stage for one night only.

Havering College of Further and Higher Education, in Essex, is inviting male performers to audition for its one-off production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Her Majesty's Theatre in Haymarket, London, in April.

Director Peter Dayson, who lectures in music at the college, said: "I am looking for male singers aged from 16 to 23 who can act and dance.

"I have the amazing coat of many colours

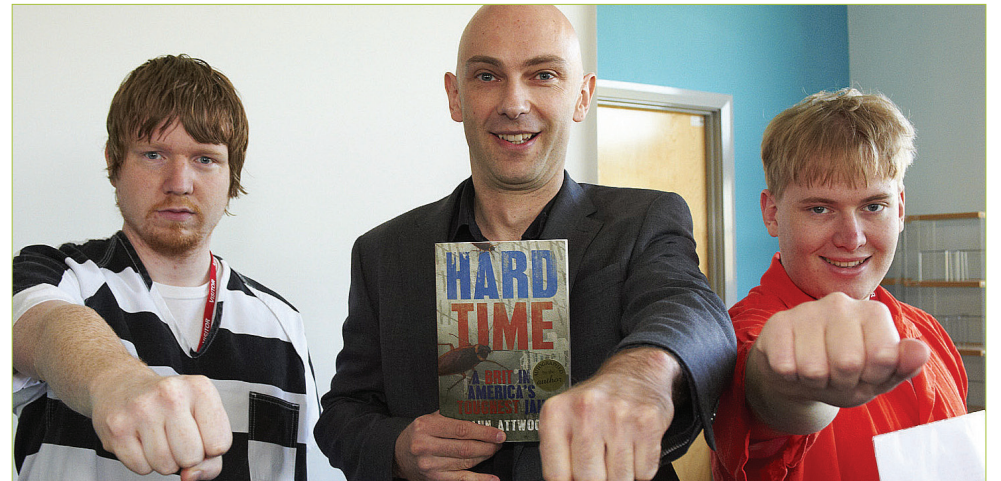
waiting for the right Joseph. I also need his brothers and an Elvis impersonator to play Pharaoh. There are some female parts for characters such as Mrs Potiphar."

Auditions are currently taking place with rehearsals due to get underway next month.

Potential cast members should be available to attend rehearsals at the college's Ardleigh Green Campus every Wednesday from 4.30pm to 6pm.

For details phone Mr Dayson on 01708 462740 or email [boxoffice@havering-college.ac.uk](mailto:boxoffice@havering-college.ac.uk)

## Prison story wows crowds at respect event



Ex-con and author Shaun Attwood (centre) demonstrates a prison greeting to students Michael Chisholm (left) and Phillip Morrall

The cautionary tale of ex-con Shaun Attwood was one of the highlights of a tolerance and respect day at a Cheshire college.

An audience at Macclesfield College was enthralled by the former stockbroker's speech, in which he told of his time spent as a prisoner in the notorious Arizona state jail system having become involved with drugs.

"The focus of my talk was on jail conditions,

gangs and the realities of living in the prison with the highest death rate in the US," said Mr Attwood.

"The students could relate to me — at school I was a model student and went to university. I am not some tough guy. It is a true story and they recognised that. It makes people really think about the consequences of the decisions they make."



FE Week event...

# WorldSkills UK squad selection

Media Partner



Shane Mann

@shanermann

Some of the UK's most talented young apprentices, employees and students have once again been put through their paces for a place in Squad UK for WorldSkills Leipzig 2013. Last week's second round, held in the Midlands, followed the initial contests in June and focused on 12 skill areas, including Mechatronics, CNC Milling and turning, Jewellery, Auto body Repair and refrigeration.

The host colleges, Northern Regional College, North Warwickshire and Hinckley College, and City College Coventry were transformed into hives of activity with 40 competitors undertaking various pressured practical examinations.

The support from colleges and employers is pivotal to the success of Squad UK; competitors need time away from the classroom or office, while college staff need time away for their support and training roles, which can include performance coaching and acting as training managers.

North Warwickshire and Hinckley College has invested heavily in WorldSkills, not only by putting forward their students for competition, but also by embedding elements of the competition within its teaching and learning strategy.

Marion Plant, the college's principal and WorldSkills champion (official supporter), is one of the most vocal supporters of WorldSkills and how it can transform lives. She is clear that while her college's commitment uses a lot of resources, the benefits to her staff, students and employers make the investment worthwhile.

"The increase in students and subject

areas signing up to WorldSkills has risen once again, and more and more of our staff are now getting involved through formal channels. I was overwhelmed by the level of response that we had to the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) request for performance coaches.

"Our involvement has had numerous positive impacts – on our success rates firstly. Plus three staff have roles as performance coaches for skills categories that are alien to them. They are now coming back to the college with a plethora of new ideas, best practice and bags full of enthusiasm – which is also a motivator for other staff. Last, and most important from my perspective, is the transformational impact it has had on the culture of our college.

"It is also rewarding to have so many of our students reaching the Squad and the Skills Show finals next month."

Ultimately just one competitor from each of 41 skills will represent the UK at the 2013 WorldSkills Championship next July. Successful competitors for Squad UK will undergo a specialised training programme supported by a dedicated training manager for each skill, as well as by a team of other trainers, experts and performance coaches. Team UK will be selected after a series of events next March.

Places are limited for Squad and Team UK Leipzig 2013, but Matthew Bell, Training Manager for Mechanical Engineering and Design, said the selection would not only nurture a team for 2013 but upcoming competitions in 2015 and 2017. "In previous years we found that we would lose some of the great talent that did not make it to the latter stages, such as squad or team. This year we are trialling a new method whereby we aim to retain all those that are taking part in today's selection. While not all of these young people will make it through to the next round, they are young



Ben Pritchard, jewellery

Pic: Shane Mann

and will continue to meet the age criteria for several competitions. So their journeys will continue alongside this year's squad and team members as an additional training exercise."

Meanwhile, a new event to inspire people about FE, skills and apprenticeships launches in November.

The Skills Show at the NEC Birmingham from November 15 to 17 is the culmination of many WorldSkills competitions and other awards, including the National Apprenticeship Awards and National Training Awards and activities.

It will provide a platform for the best of the nation's young talent to perform, as well as providing opportunities for visitors to have a go at new skills, get careers advice, access apprenticeships or job opportunities.

Jaine Bolton, chief operating officer for the NAS and official UK delegate to WorldSkills International, said: "I offer my support and congratulations to every young person that has been invited to compete for a place in Squad UK.

"By competing in international competitions, the UK is able to showcase the high levels of performance that can be achieved by individuals and organisations through high quality further education, skills training and Apprenticeships.

This provides the inspiration for young people and adults to be ambitious in their pursuit of skills to the highest level."

FE Week will be following the journey of the UK competitors from selection to the grand finale at the Leipzig WorldSkills Show in 2013.



Martin McGarry, autorepair



Pics: Nick Linford



## FE Week Q&A: Bill Jones is a cluster lead for WorldSkills which is a mentoring role for seven training managers. Has worked with WorldSkills for 17 years and has attended eight international competitions

### How has WorldSkills changed during your time on board?

Massively. We now have a really professional organisation and it's grown hugely. My first competition was in 1997 in St Galen, Switzerland. I went not knowing or really understanding what I was expected to do or what we were going into. We weren't given much training in those days by our organisation, other than general logistics of what we were likely to face. We came second to last, and quite rightly.

WorldSkills London in 2011 was the best, without a doubt. It very much rivalled the Olympics, except it was very cosseted to us. I wish more people had been able to experience it.

### Clearly there is a buy-in from the FE sector, but what about employers?

There is a more of a buy-in now from bigger companies. They have seen the benefits, not just to themselves, but also to the industry when there is a real hard core of good quality ex-WorldSkills competitors. Without a doubt I've seen that happen so many times. Mentally these kids have to be tough. There is no doubt in my mind that to win any kind of a medal, it's 70 per cent mental, what your head is telling your hands to do. These are all gifted kids, they really are talented in their own ways and they're very competitive.

### How do you choose when there are so many talented young people applying to compete?

A number of factors are common to every selection. You are obviously looking for good skills, methodology, organisational ability, problem-solving, mental toughness, character, reactions when things go wrong, to be able to pull yourself up by the boot strap. There is massive pressure when they get on to a world stage!

### What makes a good training manager?

Most of our training managers come from FE. We are not looking for teachers, we're looking for coaches and mentors. They may well demonstrate something during training, but we never really teach anybody anything; the competitor teaches themselves. The penny needs to drop in their own mind.

We try to persuade our training managers to go through this coaching approach, so they ask very pertinent questions and listen very carefully.

For me, this is a competitor's journey, it's not a training manager's journey. We are part of that journey. Nobody taught Jessica Ennis to run, but her coach made her better, and that's what these guys are doing. They're looking for raw talent and they're saying right, I want to make you better.



From left: Bill Jones being interviewed by Shane Mann for FE Week

Pic: Nick Linford



Car painting with Rebecca Wilson and (right) Patrick Quinn Pics: Ellis O'Brian Photography and Nick Linford



Ben Anderson, CNC Turning

Pic: Shane Mann



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## FE Week event...

## Ofsted previews their report on

Chris Henwood

@chris\_henwood

Poor inspection grades at colleges already suspected of performing badly are hiding a general downward trend in results, chief college inspector Mike Davis has told *FE Week*.

The principal officer for FE colleges at Her Majesty's Inspectorate said that a range of issues that kept cropping up were affecting results.

He conceded colleges considered at risk of lower grades were being targeted which skewed overall results.

But Mr Davis said their lower grades were also being reflected across the board.

"There are issues — I understand and accept that — about it not being a proportionate sample because of risk assessment meaning that we look at a higher proportion of those of concern," he said at an LSIS conference on college performance.

"But the general sense is that of those that we're inspecting, the movement is not in the right direction."

Mr Davis also revealed how the Skills Funding Agency's £30m student satisfaction website, FE Choices, was seen as carrying irrelevant information in light of Ofsted's new competitor website, Learner View.

"The data that is in FE Choices is often many years out-of-date by the time of publication, so it is not necessarily relevant for that cohort of learners," said Mr Davis.

"It doesn't cover all of the providers. Sixth-form colleges, for instance, are excluded."

He was addressing the Birmingham conference on September 19, giving a taster of the findings in Ofsted's *How Colleges Improve* report, due out shortly.

"The overriding message for organisations — whether they maintained high standards, moved forwards, or wobbled around in terms of quality and standards — was that the importance and impact of outstanding leadership and management cannot be underestimated in how colleges improve," said Mr Davis.

"All the elements in the report are inextricably linked to the actions and behaviours of leaders and managers."

He added: "Themes that come through are complacency, a lack of ambition, direction and vision from the top."

"Governors who did not set clear institutional targets or monitor performance well enough, they were quite restrained in terms of their understanding of their role and what their expectation of the college."

"Therefore they monitored too narrowly and in some instances they allowed the senior management or leaders to effectively tell them what their targets should be."

"Again on inspection in many of these organisations there's a defensive and inward-looking approach to management. They are organisations which look inward rather than outward."

Mr Davis said he wanted to see good teaching take precedence over issues such as finance and buildings.

"Leaders and managers are too focused on finance and, or buildings to the detriment of the promotion of good teaching and learning, or the development of the curriculum," he said.

"Now we go to organisations sometimes where say that it's been really difficult. I know it's been difficult in the sector — I worked in the sector for a long time and it has been very difficult over the last number of years."

"But at the end of the day, the learners that are in classes or on programmes this year will not benefit from that new build, which is a year, two years down the line, and if senior managers spend a lot of time and energy looking at that to the detriment of the curriculum and the quality of the teaching they will be held accountable."

Mr Davis added: "Management teams that were unsettled by frequent changes in personnel or too reliant on external consultants working in key roles on an extended basis."

**"The general sense is that of those that we're inspecting, the movement is not in the right direction"**

"So you've got this flux going on inside the organisation, people arriving or going who don't have particular allegiance to the college, lots of stop gaps all over the place, so everybody starts getting demotivated in terms of their role and how the whole thing fits together."

"Poorly-managed staff changes led to a loss of expertise and often were accompanied by a plethora of management initiatives that were simply not explained properly to staff."

"There is an issue where inadequate quality assurance systems extended to poor monitoring of sub-contracted work — if you've got an organisation that hasn't got its own house in order in terms of quality assurance, assessment, a real clear focus on learners and driving up improvement, some of these organisations have taken the opportunity to take on numerous large subcontracted provision."

He took on the challenge of laid down by chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw, who questioned whether colleges should look for opportunities abroad when they should be concentrating on local learners.

"Sir Michael is asking the question about other types of provision — surely there should be some link here between the organisation's ability to manage its own provision well and the opportunity to expand and develop its own empire?"



Mike Davis presents a summary of the Ofsted's *How Colleges Improve* report.  
\*Not all slides pictured and words may differ in the report

Pics: Nick Linford





# effective practice in colleges

Colleges where performance declined or was not improving shared some of the following characteristics.

**Ofsted**

**Some key findings:**

- complacency, a lack of ambition and direction or vision from the top
- governors who did not set clear institutional targets, or monitor performance well enough
- defensive and inward looking approaches to management
- leaders and managers too focussed on finance and/or buildings to the detriment of promoting good teaching and learning or developing the curriculum

Colleges where performance declined or was not improving shared some of the following characteristics.

**Ofsted**

**Some key findings:**

- management teams that were unsettled by frequent changes in personnel or were too reliant on external consultants working in key roles on an extended basis
- poorly managed staff changes leading to a loss of expertise, often accompanied by a plethora of management initiatives not properly explained to staff
- inadequate quality assurance systems that extended to poor monitoring of subcontracted work

Colleges where performance declined or was not improving shared some of the following characteristics.

**Ofsted**

**Some key findings:**

- weak self-assessment coupled to poor use of management information
- self-assessment reports that were over-optimistic and lacked critical insight
- poor communication with a tendency for staff at different levels not to take ownership or responsibility for actions, resulting in a blame culture

Colleges where performance declined or was not improving shared some of the following characteristics.

**Ofsted**

**Some key findings:**

- improvement actions arising from previous inspection/s were not carried out, and in a few cases there was a refusal to even recognise the findings of the last inspection report
- observation systems for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning and assessment lacked rigour and did not provide a robust basis for improvement
- sharing of good teaching amongst staff was not systematic



## Digital Practitioner Award

**niace**  
promoting adult learning

**BIS**  
Department for  
Business  
Innovation  
& Skills

**Skills  
Funding  
Agency**

**Ministry of  
JUSTICE**  
National Offender  
Management Service

**Virtual Campus**

**LSIS**  
LEARNING AND SKILLS  
IMPROVEMENT  
SERVICE

NIACE's "Digital Practitioner Award" recognises adult learning tutors who have made an outstanding contribution to improving learning & teaching by using technology.

Winners receive a certificate, a £300 voucher and free entry to NIACE's major conference

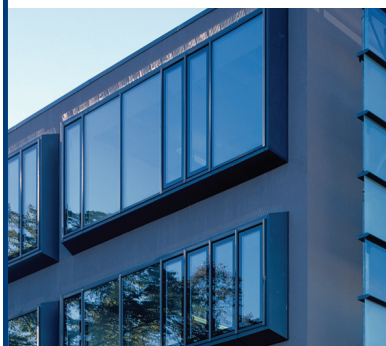
"Innovating Learning" on December 4, 2012 in Manchester.

There are three awards for digital practitioners and one special award for technology in offender learning.

Nominations close on November 12, 2012 at 5pm

**Nominate now at [www.niace.org.uk](http://www.niace.org.uk)**





# Deputy Principal – Curriculum and Quality

## Highly Competitive Package



CITY AND ISLINGTON  
COLLEGE

City & Islington College is one of the leading Further Education colleges in England. Ofsted has highlighted our provision as outstanding in every measure and we are rightly proud of our broad and responsive curriculum that offers excellent progression routes to a large and diverse student population.

We are an organisation with a single and binding focus – the provision of outstanding education and training for all those who study and learn with us. As a College we have already achieved a great deal and students consistently rate their experience highly. However, we are determined to maintain and extend our reputation for excellence as a highly successful provider of education and skills. Quality is the key to our success.

A rare and exciting opportunity has arisen as we seek to recruit a new Deputy Principal. You will provide strategic direction and leadership to build on our track record of outstanding 14-19, adult, work-based and higher education provision. Ambitious for the College and our students, you will explore new models of teaching and learning and develop new partnerships that will improve our success rates and better meet the needs of the community we serve. As one of three senior postholders in a highly influential college, you will have the opportunity to make an impact in the sector, whilst developing your own skills and capacity in a demanding inner-city location.

**For further information, including details of how to apply, please visit [www.odgersberndtson.co.uk/39511](http://www.odgersberndtson.co.uk/39511) to download a full information pack and [www.candi.ac.uk/](http://www.candi.ac.uk/) to find out more about the College. Closing date: 15th October 2012.**

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### DIRECTOR OF POLICY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Salary: £50,000 - £55,000 pa

A full-time post based at Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham NG8 3NH. However, travel to relevant meetings will be required.

This is an exciting opportunity for a self-motivated professional to play a key role in the EMFEC and ABC Awards Group which is a thriving and growing organisation promoting and supporting excellence in the learning and skills sector. We deliver impartial and responsive support services and intelligence to our member colleges and the wider further education community. We ensure that the voice of the region's colleges is heard, at regional and national level, through the representation service that we provide to the Association of Colleges, East Midlands. EMFEC has a commitment to partnership working as exemplified in the projects and networks which we initiate and lead on behalf of the sector.

As a member of the Group Senior Leadership Team your key responsibility will be to contribute positively to the development of the Company's Group strategic plan, direction and decision-making and proactively work towards the achievement of shared Group organisational vision and goals.

You will be responsible for the strategic management and delivery of the Company's Policy and Professional Development Directorate within EMFEC.

Your communication and people skills must be excellent. You will be an energetic, ambitious and experienced leader with strong and highly developed business acumen. You will have vision and the capacity to make a distinctive contribution within the Group.

Closing date: 12 noon on Wednesday 10 October 2012  
Interviews: Friday 26 October 2012 at Robins Wood House,  
Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3NH.

For further details please visit [www.emfec.co.uk](http://www.emfec.co.uk) or  
[www.abcawards.co.uk](http://www.abcawards.co.uk) or  
contact HR on 0115 8541628 or [tracyr@emfec.co.uk](mailto:tracyr@emfec.co.uk)

### Assistant Principal of Information

Full time 37 hours per week  
Salary: £44,823 - £50,643 pa  
Ref: HR 650



Stockport College is a major skills provider with excellent results. Graded outstanding by Ofsted and with a major programme of Campus development, we are the perfect place for you to pass our knowledge on to others!

To provide leadership, strategic direction and management for the College's information service and systems.

The successful applicant will have a recognised first degree (or working towards a recognised first degree) or possession of an equivalent professional/vocational qualification, plus a recognised management qualification or evidence of recent continuous professional development. We will also require a minimum Level 2 Literacy qualification and Level 3 Numeracy.

You will have significant experience of managing data, information systems and ensuring quality management information and the understanding of funding regimes and associated returns. We also require you to have experience of managing the enrolment and information service within a College or other education environment.

Closing Date: - 1st October 2012

Benefits include a final salary pension scheme, generous holiday entitlement, subsidised meals, on-site gym and access to learning opportunities.

For an application form and further details please contact:  
Human Resources on 0161 296.5653 (answer phone after 4.30pm)  
or email [jobs@stockport.ac.uk](mailto:jobs@stockport.ac.uk)

We are particularly keen to reflect the diverse population of the College and welcome applications from suitably experienced individuals irrespective of racial origin, age, sex or disability.







## Principal of Buxton and Leek College

Competitive salary with benefits



### A NEW College and a unique challenge!

**The Context.** Buxton and Leek Colleges have merged to form an exciting new entity within the University of Derby Group. Combined, we will have almost 4,000 learners and revenue of almost £10m. Opportunities for the existing Colleges will be extended within the University Group.

The outline intention is both to strengthen the FE brand in the region and to take full advantage of a co-ordinated approach to provision, to the greater benefit of learners, communities and employers. Operating as a single College, the new institution will operate from both sites at Buxton and Leek.

The new Principal will be able to establish a single College culture and also to communicate in an effective and exemplary manner with communities and stakeholders. If you feel you can meet this exacting specification then we want to hear from you.

The new College will have a new identity. At the same time, it will embody the Values of the University of Derby Group with particular regard to Quality, Valuing People, Customer Focus, Opportunity and Openness and Challenge and Innovation.

**The Role.** A different and refreshed approach to provision mandates that leadership of the new College will have interesting features. The new Principal will be charged with establishing a single College environment on two historic sites; protecting and growing provision; complying with

the strategic and operational priorities of the University Group and being fully alert to all policy and funding shifts, creating challenge and opportunity for the College's sector. The new College will be distinct because of its structure and context. Equally, it will be characterised by high impact and achievement.

**The Person.** To succeed in this new role, the successful candidate will have vision, a developed understanding of sector dynamics and the capacity to make a distinctive contribution within the University Group.



We are working with College Leadership Services on this important appointment.

Please contact Helen Anderson for an application pack: [handerson@collegeleadership.co.uk](mailto:handerson@collegeleadership.co.uk) or 0115 911 1117, or visit [www.collegeleadership.co.uk/current\\_appointments.asp](http://www.collegeleadership.co.uk/current_appointments.asp) for further information about this post.

College Leadership Services  
Expertise in FE

The closing date for this post is 12pm on Friday 5th October 2012. First interviews will be held on Wednesday 24th October, with second interviews taking place on Wednesday 31st October 2012.

Part of  
UNIVERSITY  
of DERBY

### Advertise here!



#### Contact:

[chardelle.mason@feweek.co.uk](mailto:chardelle.mason@feweek.co.uk)

0208 1234 891



### Sales & Marketing Director

Training Company, North of England

This is a long established business that has exciting plans to grow and expand beyond its current geographical area.

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a focused and skilled individual to manage the company's existing sales and marketing activities, drive new growth opportunities and be an influential member of the company's Senior Management Team.

You will be someone with vision, self-belief and a firm commitment to achieving results as well as someone who enjoys a challenge and can motivate others around them to ensure a successful team performance.

In return we offer a salary and benefits commensurate with the position and a fantastic opportunity to shape and influence the company's future.

Please forward your CV together with a covering note containing current and expected remuneration to [purpleheartsr@gmail.com](mailto:purpleheartsr@gmail.com)



### GROUP MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS CO-ORDINATOR

Salary: Circa £25,000

This is an exciting opportunity for someone passionate about marketing to play a key role in the EMFEC and ABC Awards Group which is a thriving and growing organisation.

Working closely with the Senior Leadership Team you will co-ordinate the EMFEC and ABC Awards Group marketing and communications function, developing and implementing appropriate activities to promote and market ABC Awards' and EMFEC's products and services ensuring that the Company gains maximum and targeted market exposure.

You must be an enthusiastic and highly motivated team player with the ability to contribute to the quality and content of all marketing and communications.

You will be forward thinking and innovative and have experience of PR and marketing with an interest in how good communications can support the success of the group. You will need a positive, flexible approach with excellent communication and organisational skills. The ability to remain organised whilst dealing with multiple projects is essential, as is a keen eye for detail, creative copy writing skills and a sound knowledge of online and social media.

The person appointed will be based at Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham NG8 3NH. However travel to the Chorley office and relevant meetings will be required.

Closing date: 12 noon on Wednesday 17 October 2012  
Interviews: Monday 29 October 2012 at Robins Wood House, Robins Wood Road, Aspley, Nottingham, NG8 3NH.

For further details please visit [www.emfec.co.uk](http://www.emfec.co.uk) or [www.abcawards.co.uk](http://www.abcawards.co.uk) or contact HR on 0115 8541628 or [tracyr@emfec.co.uk](mailto:tracyr@emfec.co.uk)



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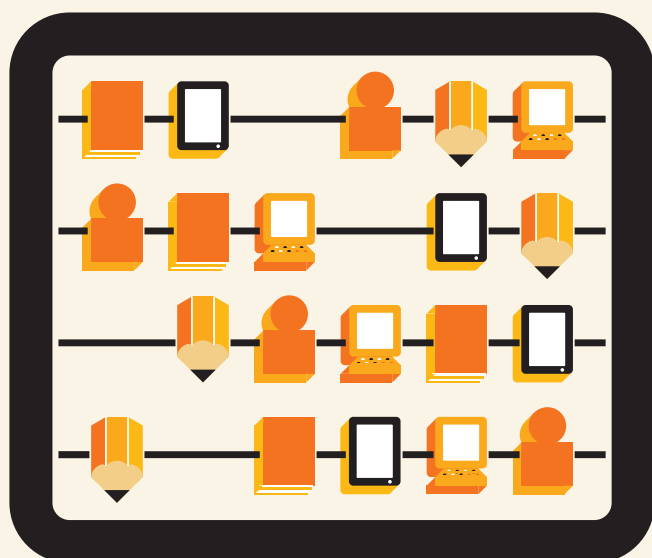
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## FE Week Sudoku challenge

		7	2		9	8		
	8	3		4		7	5	
5				3				1
	9							2
		5	3		8	4		
	3							6
4				8				9
	7	9		2		6	8	
		1	6		4	3		

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

	1	3	2					
4	7				1			
		6	3					2
				3	9	6		
		4				7		
		5	6	4				
	2				3	8		
			9				4	2
					7	1	3	

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## Last Week's solutions

2	3	9	1	5	6	8	4	7
8	5	7	9	3	4	2	1	6
6	1	4	2	8	7	5	9	3
1	6	8	4	2	5	7	3	9
3	4	2	7	1	9	6	8	5
9	7	5	3	6	8	4	2	1
5	8	3	6	9	2	1	7	4
7	2	1	5	4	3	9	6	8
4	9	6	8	7	1	3	5	2

Difficulty:  
**EASY**

8	3	1	6	2	5	9	4	7
2	6	4	9	7	8	5	3	1
5	7	9	1	4	3	2	6	8
9	2	7	5	1	4	6	8	3
3	8	5	2	6	7	1	9	4
1	4	6	8	3	9	7	2	5
7	9	3	4	5	6	8	1	2
4	1	8	7	9	2	3	5	6
6	5	2	3	8	1	4	7	9

Difficulty:  
**MEDIUM**

## FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



*"Mostly this week I have been making big holes in the Greenwich Park sandpit"*

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford